

A DISCUSSION OF MAURICE RAVEL'S MASTERPIECE,
LE TOMBEAU DE COUPERIN

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Abstract

In the late nineteenth century, the impressionist movement in music occurred as a reaction to the excesses of the Romantic era. Maurice Ravel is one of the mainstream French impressionists with Claude Debussy. Even though Ravel developed his impressionism on the basis of Debussy's ideas, Ravel's music style was individual. Ravel was a craftsman and a traditionalist. While Debussy's music just focused on atmosphere, Ravel's music had clear form and his ideas were never obscured. As well as his musical individualism acquired from Debussy, Ravel made other distinctive contributions to nineteenth- and twentieth-century French music. He contributed neoclassical music, and special orchestral transcriptions. To demonstrate these ideas, I will discuss Ravel's piano music, *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. *Le Tombeau de Couperin* reflects Ravel's independent music style very well, especially neoclassicism, on the basis of impressionism.

My goal in this paper is to show that Ravel developed his independent ideas through new trials, and will also demonstrate how the distinguishing characteristics were reflected in his music, *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. Ravel's music, *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, alone is sufficient to prove his greatness.